

21 percent. In addition, he established a Web/call-in center which handled 21,412 beneficiary requests for 47,213 prescription conversions as of November 2008, which amounts to an estimated cost avoidance of \$3.2 million to date. Major General Granger also oversaw the establishment of the voluntary agreement for retail rebates, which has resulted in a pharmaceutical industry rebate of \$28 million since the beginning of 2007. Further, he established electronic claims processing which has already saved \$1.6 million in administrative fees in addition to \$105 million in overhead savings.

A native of West Memphis, AR, MG Elder Granger has played an active role in veterans' medical services since the beginning of his career. He represents the great progress that has and will continue to occur within the military health system. He is a mentor to his staff, a leader in his field, and a soldier ready for any mission.

I am honored to recognize his service.●

TRIBUTE TO HAROLD "BUDDY" BROWN

● Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, today the people of Interior Alaska—our Native people and the entire Fairbanks community—mourn the loss of one of the most promising Native leaders of this generation.

Harold "Buddy" Brown died yesterday of cancer at the age of 39. Buddy is survived by his wife Patti and two children, Xavier, age 7, and Alana, age 3.

Throughout Indian Country we are witnessing the generational shift in leadership to young people who have mastered the challenge of living in two worlds. They have completed college, gone on to obtain graduate and professional degrees, and returned to serve their people. One foot in the traditional world of their Native communities, the other in the modern worlds of business, finance, management and law.

Within the Alaska Native community, Buddy Brown stood at the vanguard of this generational shift. After graduating from the University of New Mexico Law School in 1997, he immediately went to work for the Tanana Chiefs Conference, the consortium of 42 tribes in Interior Alaska. He was hired on as associate counsel.

Five years later, Buddy was elected President of the Tanana Chiefs Conference. In this role he led a region which encompasses about 235,000 square miles, an area equal to about 37 percent of the State of Alaska and just slightly smaller than the state of Texas. In 2006, Buddy retired from this position to heal and to spend time with his family.

The Tanana Chiefs region is known throughout the State of Alaska for producing leaders of statewide and national repute—Bridge builders who have a particular talent for engaging the broader community to support the

causes and concerns of our Native people.

The late Morris Thompson, who tragically died in the 2000 crash of Alaska Airlines Flight 261, is the best known Native leader to come from this region, beloved throughout the State for his talent in building bridges.

Morris Thompson was Buddy Brown's mentor and friend, and I am told that he expected Buddy Brown would grow to become a leader whose accomplishments would exceed Morris's own. Buddy was widely regarded in Alaska as the best and brightest of this new generation. He reached great heights in a few short years, but I am saddened that Alaska will never realize the true potential of this truly extraordinary individual.

There is little I can say to console our grieving community today but I do have a few words for Xavier and Alana and the Native youth of Interior Alaska. Buddy Brown appreciated that youth is no impediment to leadership, that the energy and new ideas of the youth are desperately needed to keep our Native institutions thriving. Buddy devoted his life to preparing to undertake this leadership role.

Take inspiration from Buddy's life and become the leader that each of you has the potential to be. I want to help you to achieve this goal for yourself, for your people, and for all of Alaska.●

REMEMBERING MORRIS O'QUIN

● Mr. PRYOR. Mr. President, today I honor the life and work of Morris O'Quin of Harrison, AR. Morris passed away unexpectedly on April 19, 2009, due to a sudden respiratory illness. I know the thoughts of many Arkansans and others around the country are with the O'Quin family, especially his wife of 21 years, Dana, and their children, Marrick and Morgan.

Morris devoted his life to public service and Arkansas agriculture. He most recently served as a Farm Service Agency—FSA—county director in Boone County, AR. In this capacity, he also served as a national board member for the National Association of Farm Service Agency State and County Office Employees—NASCOE—where he advocated on behalf of other employees and volunteers who served similar roles as public servants in the agricultural sector in Arkansas and throughout the country. He has been a lifelong advocate for agriculture.

Since coming to the Senate in 2003, I have had the benefit of getting to know Morris well during his frequent trips to Washington to meet with other leaders of the Farm Service Agency, advancing the mission and purpose of the Agency. He was an ambassador for the State of Arkansas and a tireless advocate for the FSA, its mission, and its employees. He understood Arkansas agriculture and the importance of the Agency in supporting continued production of agricultural products. His duty to the Farm Service Agency and

the promotion of its mission were his passions.

I vividly remember working closely with Morris in 2005 to ensure that the Department of Agriculture did not irresponsibly move to reduce the essential services that the Farm Service Agency provides to farmers and ranchers through the county office structure. He explained to me that the county offices provide essential services to the farmer through face-to-face interactions and that shutting down multiple county offices without making needed technology upgrades and providing technical assistance for this transition would cause significant harm to our nation's farmers and ranchers.

His advocacy for FSA workers and the farm community in Arkansas along with his leadership within NASCOE helped me pass a critical amendment to 2006 Agriculture appropriations bill to prevent FSA county office closures and further consolidations. This amendment prevented the administration from closing over 700 county offices nationwide and ensured that the critical services provided by these offices would continue until the USDA developed technology upgrades needed to make such a transition, and until the USDA clearly explained the needs and benefits for making such drastic reforms. This was a tremendous accomplishment that would not have been possible without Morris's focus and leadership.

Morris understood that without the hard work and sacrifice of local FSA employees, many family farms would not have the resources necessary to make a living and provide America a safe and affordable food supply that we all too often take for granted. This understanding was behind his drive to convince me and other lawmakers of the importance of stopping the USDA initiative to diminish the role of FSA offices and employees.

Morris's most recent accomplishment revealed his care for the community. After the devastating Arkansas ice storms that hit in January of this year, Morris spent hours working to deliver essential FSA services to neighbors, farmers, and ranchers in Boone County and other parts of northern Arkansas. The 2009 ice storm caused extreme damage to northern Arkansas, and Morris stepped up to provide much needed assistance. Under much pressure, he was doing a tremendous job of providing Environmental Conservation Program funds to help get impacted farmers back on their feet and producing again. This is just one other example of his exemplary work in his capacity as a public servant.

While I will remember Morris for his work as a county director and a NASCOE advocate, I will remember him most for his kind and calm demeanor, his concern for the well-being of those around him, his tireless work on behalf of those who depended on him, and his character and integrity in all of his endeavors. He was a relatively quiet person, not a personality

that you get a lot of in Washington, but he was filled with pride for his work, the work of FSA employees, and American agriculture. He would always articulate the importance of these to me in the most clear, concise, and endearing terms. Meeting with him was always a pleasure as he carried a calmness about him that always reminded me of the best of Arkansas. Much like many Arkansans I know, he possessed a kind heart and a gentle spirit always putting others before him. He earned my enduring respect and admiration. I will remember him for his optimistic spirit, enjoyable personality, and humble and effective leadership.

It is with great sadness, that I come before the Senate today, but I know he has gone to a better place, and deservedly so. I am honored to have known him and worked with him during his time on Earth. I send his wife Dana and their two children my deepest condolences. Morris O'Quin will certainly be missed, but he will never be forgotten. I ask my colleagues to keep the O'Quin family, Morris's coworkers, and his friends in your thoughts and prayers in this most difficult time.●

VERMONT CELEBRATES ITS LEADERS IN LABOR RIGHTS

● Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I wish to rise today to honor two Vermont businesses, Chroma Technology Corporation and Seventh Generation, which have been named to the 2009 List of Most Democratic Workplaces. This list, compiled by the labor rights organization WorldBlu, selects the gold standard in fair labor practices each year.

By creating incentives for workers to constructively participate in the governance of their company, Chroma Technology Corporation of Rockingham, VT, exemplifies the ideal of the Most Democratic Workplace. With a decentralized power structure, and with every worker eligible to become a member of the board of directors, employees genuinely play a major role in business decisions and company practices. Moreover, Chroma is 100 percent employee owned, and sets a limit on executive compensation, a limit determined by a ratio of the pay scale for the lowest-paid workers in the firm. Chroma has also developed an innovative profit-sharing system for all its employees.

The other Vermont business to receive this prestigious award, Seventh Generation, is a producer of cleaning and home care products in Burlington, VT. This impressive firm truly challenges its employees to not only participate in all aspects of the company's operations, but also to take the company's mission of positive change and apply it to the outside world. Employees can apply for committee-approved paid sabbaticals in order to participate in philanthropic endeavors. To foster companywide professional development, Seventh Generation combines

teambuilding with cross-functional communication so employees gain perspective on the company's big picture operations and goals. Through these professional opportunities and many other policies, employees work outside of the box and come to share the mission of the company.

Perhaps not all companies can adopt every strategy of these two industry leaders, but we should recognize the value of their business models. Both Chroma and Seventh Generation go above and beyond the duty of an employer, and our entire economy benefits from the investment they make in training the best employees possible. I urge every American company—indeed every lawmaker in Congress—to consider the lessons we can take from these Most Democratic Workplaces. Improving job training and developing human resources is important, especially in our current challenging economy; at the same time, investment in workers creates a lasting benefit that lays the foundation for a strong future.

Treating workers with dignity and respect, enabling them to not only develop their capacities, but participate in decisionmaking, is essential to creating democratic and productive workplaces.

Mr. President, I commend Chroma Technology and Seventh Generation for a job very well done and to congratulate them on their selection as a 2009 Most Democratic Workplace.●

HONORING MICRO TECHNOLOGIES

● Ms. SNOWE. Mr. President, in our present economic situation, small businesses are finding it increasingly difficult to maintain their current operations, let alone expand their facilities, add new employees, or make significant improvements. Despite that, some firms are attempting to move forward on planned expansions, hoping to see a greater return on their investment in the future. I rise today to recognize Micro Technologies, a small company in my home State of Maine that is pushing ahead to expand its business and bring new jobs to Midcoast Maine.

Founded in 1996, Micro Technologies, located in the rural town of Richmond, serves a very specialized niche in the world of science. Focusing on aquatic animal health, Micro Technologies provides critical research and testing, diagnostics, and veterinary services related to the health of various aquatic marine species to a wide range of clients, from government agencies to small farms. The company presently has 13 employees, most of whom are graduates of Maine universities and colleges. Approved by Department of Agriculture, USDA, for export testing, Micro Technologies works with companies across the United States, Central and South America, as well as Europe.

The company's innovative research aids scientists in their quest to explain and solve a plethora of complicated health problems of aquatic animals,

from common finfish like salmon and cod, to bivalves such as oysters and clams, to crustaceans like the Maine lobster. For instance, Micro Technologies' work has centered on studying viruses that affect shrimp and the causes of shell disease among lobsters. Additionally, the company tests various species for the presence of harmful viruses, ensuring that firms involved in the shipment of these species have the safest product possible. This, in turn, promotes expedient shipping, and reduces negative environmental impacts.

While the current economic insecurity poses problems to businesses large and small, Micro Technologies is moving forward on a plan to expand its facilities, add employees, and broaden the scope of its work. The company recently received a \$200,000 grant from the Community Development Block Grant Program, which is aimed at helping communities across the country build affordable housing and retain businesses seeking to grow. Richmond's full board of selectmen unanimously endorsed the company's proposal before submitting the application to the Maine Department of Economic and Community Development, which approved the grant. Partnering with the town of Richmond, Micro Technologies will use this grant to make renovations to its existing facility, purchase a nearby building, add seven quality new positions, and expand its manufacturing capabilities. Micro Technologies also hopes to begin an apprenticeship program to introduce students interested in science to the unique work the company does.

American entrepreneurs have strengthened our country and its economy in good times and bad. As Micro Technologies seeks to grow, it will provide a positive impact on the local community as well as the aquatic animal health industry, which is crucial in Maine. I wish everyone at Micro Technologies best wishes and much success in their planned expansion.●

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 12:10 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Zapata, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, without amendment:

S. 39. An act to repeal section 10(f) of Public Law 93-531, commonly known as the "Bennett Freeze".

The message also announced that the House has passed the following joint resolution, without amendment:

S.J. Res. 8. Joint resolution providing for the appointment of David M. Rubenstein as a citizen regent of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution.

The message further announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 388. An act to assist in the conservation of cranes by supporting and providing, through projects of persons and organizations with expertise in crane conservation,